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Non-governmental organizations

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2008 regular session

(New York, 21-30 January 2008)

Summary

At its 2008 regular session, held from 21 to 30 January 2008, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had before it 145 applications for consultative status, including applications deferred from its 1999 through 2007 sessions. Of those applications, the Committee recommended 70 for consultative status, deferred 68 for further consideration at a later date, took note that three non-governmental organizations had withdrawn their applications and closed consideration of the applications of two non-governmental organizations. It did not recommend 30 non-governmental organizations deferred from previous sessions. The Committee also had before it five requests for reclassification of consultative status, of which it recommended two. In addition, it had before it 142 quadrennial reports, of which it reviewed 59 and took note of 53. The Committee heard 15 representatives of non-governmental organizations.

The present report contains one draft resolution and four draft decisions on matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft resolution I, the Council would decide to adopt the draft resolution submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations, entitled "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures".

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 70 non-governmental organizations;

(b) Reclassify the consultative status of two non-governmental organizations;

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(c) Note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 53 non-governmental organizations;

(d) Note that the Committee decided to close consideration of the applications of two non-governmental organizations;

(e) Note that the Committee decided to take note of the withdrawal of the applications of three non-governmental organizations.

By draft decision II, the Council would decide not to grant consultative status to the organization Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales.

By draft decision III, the Council would decide not to grant consultative status to the organization American Sports Committee.

By draft decision IV, the Council would take note of the present report.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft resolution for adoption by the Council

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 on the consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations,

Reaffirming its resolution 1996/31, in which it established that one of the primary purposes of the consultative arrangement is to secure expert information or advice from organizations whose special competence and/or activities in areas of direct relevance to the aims and purposes of the United Nations qualified them to make a significant contribution to the work of the Council,

Mindful of the importance of an efficient and effective quadrennial reporting and review system to ensure the smooth functioning of a dynamic and productive consultative arrangement as set out in its resolution 1996/31,

Emphasizing that the quadrennial reporting exercise mandated under resolution 1996/31 constitutes the only formal monitoring mechanism established to enable the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to confirm the continued existence and activity of a non-governmental organization and to determine that the organization conforms at all times to the principles governing the establishment and nature of its consultative relationship,

Recalling, in particular, paragraphs 55, 57 (c) and 61 (c) of its resolution 1996/31, which set out the responsibility of non-governmental organizations in general or special consultative status to submit quadrennial reports and the basis for the suspension or withdrawal of such consultative status for those organizations that fail to make any positive or effective contribution to the work of the United Nations,

Expressing serious concern at the unsatisfactory submission of quadrennial reports,

1. *Decides* that the procedure for the submission of quadrennial reports for a non-governmental organization in general or special consultative status shall be as follows:

(a) Six months prior to the due date for the report, the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs shall write to the non-governmental organization concerned to remind it of the reporting requirement, the expected date of the submission of the report and the penalties for non-reporting, as stipulated in the present resolution in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31;

(b) One month after the due date for the report, the Non-Governmental Organizations Section shall send a notice to the non-governmental organization concerned reminding it of the reporting requirement and of the penalties for non-reporting, and requesting that the report be submitted by the first day of the following January;

(c) If the outstanding report is not received by the first day of the following January, the Non-Governmental Organizations Section shall send a final letter to the non-governmental organization concerned, requesting that the report be submitted by the first day of the following May and warning that non-receipt of the report by that date shall result in the suspension of consultative status, and shall copy the letter to the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the country where the non-governmental organization has its headquarters;

(d) If no report is received by the first day of the following May, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations shall, at its resumed session, compile a list of all non-governmental organizations with outstanding reports and recommend to the Council the immediate suspension of their consultative status for a period of one year;

(e) Following a decision by the Council to suspend the consultative status of any non-governmental organization with an outstanding report, the Non-Governmental Organizations Section shall write to the non-governmental organization concerned advising it of the suspension, requesting the submission of the outstanding report by the first day of May of the following year and warning that failure to submit the report by such time shall result in the withdrawal of consultative status, and shall copy the letter to the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the country where the non-governmental organization has its headquarters;

(f) At its resumed session to be held the following May, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations shall review the status of reporting of the non-governmental organizations whose consultative status has been suspended and shall recommend to the Council either the reinstatement of consultative status for any non-governmental organization that has hitherto submitted its report or the withdrawal of consultative status for any non-governmental organization with a continued outstanding report;

2. *Reiterates* that, in accordance with paragraph 56 of its resolution 1996/31, in cases where the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations has decided to recommend that the general or special consultative status of a non-governmental organization or its listing on the Roster be suspended or withdrawn, the non-governmental organization concerned shall have an opportunity to present its response for appropriate consideration by the Committee as expeditiously as possible;

3. *Also reiterates* that, in accordance with paragraph 59 of its resolution 1996/31, a non-governmental organization whose consultative status or whose listing on the Roster is withdrawn may be entitled to reapply for consultative status or for inclusion on the Roster not sooner than three years after the effective date of such withdrawal;

4. *Requests* the Non-Governmental Organizations Section to ensure that the revised guidelines are clearly posted on the website of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section and included in the initial letter sent to each non-governmental organization that has been granted general or special consultative status.

B. Draft decisions for adoption by the Council

2. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations also recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decisions:

Draft decision I
Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant consultative status to the following non-governmental organizations:

Special consultative status

Action pour le développement de l'agriculture et de la pêche avec protection environnementale de Likende
Advisory Network for African Information Society
Africa Humanitarian Action
Agence de développement économique et culturel nord-sud
Assemblea delle Donne per lo Sviluppo e la Lotta Contro L'Esclusione Sociale
Association Cœur Africain
Association "Les enfants de Frankie"
Baltic Sea Forum
Batani International Development Fund for Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation
Bharat Sevashram Sangha
Black Sea Civil Society Solidarity Association
Carter Center
Center for Egyptian Women's Legal Assistance Foundation
Centre for European Constitutional Law
Centre independent de recherches et d'initiatives pour le dialogue
Children International
Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group
Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre
Colonie des pionniers de développement
Council on Health Research for Development
Environic Foundation International
Federation of Environmental and Ecological Diversity for Agricultural Revampment and Human Rights
Federation of Jain Associations in North America
Foundation for Human Rights Initiative
Fundação de Assistência Médica Internacional
Fundación Guayasamín

Fundación para la Libertad
Geneva Infant Feeding Association
Geneva Social Observatory
Global Workers Justice Alliance
God's Harvest Foundation
Grupo Ecologico Sierra Gorda
Hunter College Center for Community and Urban Health
Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology
International Paralympic Committee
Mountain Women Development Organization
New Future Foundation
Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association
Nigeria-Togo Association
Okedongmu Children in Korea
Ordre des avocats de Paris
Organisation pour la communication en Afrique et de promotion de la coopération économique internationale
Peace Parks Foundation
People to People
Physicians for Peace
Pos Keadilan Peduli Umat
Rehabilitation and Research Centre for Torture Victims
Roma Centre for Social Intervention and Studies
Rural Africa Water Development Project
Santé de la reproduction pour une maternité sans risque
School of Human Genetics and Population Health
Social Action Forum for Manav Adhikar
Society for the Protection and Assistance of the Socially Disadvantaged Individuals
Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad
SustainUS
Talented Girl Students Trust
Women in Development and Environment (Nigeria)
Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management
Women's Association for a Better Aging Society
Women's General Association of Macau
World of Hope International
Youth of JAZAS

Roster

Asia Darshana
Association pour le développement du Dja
Beckley Foundation
Business Humanitarian Forum
Collaborative Labeling and Appliance Standards Program
Fundació Futbol Club Barcelona
International Osteoporosis Foundation
Iranian Society of Engineering Design and Assembly

(b) To reclassify the following non-governmental organizations from Roster to special consultative status:

Foundation for Subjective Experience and Research
Yachay Wasi

(c) To note that the Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of the following 53 non-governmental organizations:

(i) For the reporting period 2003-2006:

Academy for Future Science
Akina Mama wa Afrika
All India Women's Education Fund Association
Arab Lawyers Union
Asociación Cubana de las Naciones Unidas
Associated Country Women of the World
Association pour le développement économique, social, environnemental du nord
Australian Council for International Development
Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha
Center for International Earth Science Information Network
Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
Chinese Association for International Understanding
Congregations of St. Joseph
Earthjustice
Federation for Women and Family Planning
FEMVision
Forum for Women and Development
Girl Scouts of the United States of America
Howard Center for Family, Religion and Society
Human Relief Foundation
Human Rights Defence Centre
Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems International
Initiatives: Women in Development
International Association for Religious Freedom
International Bureau for Children's Rights
International Confederation for Family Support
International Federation for Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida
International Federation of Business and Professional Women
International Fellowship of Reconciliation
International Institute for the Rights of the Child
International Islamic Committee for Woman and Child
International Kolping Society
International Multiracial Shared Cultural Organization
International Social Service
International Volunteerism Organization for Women, Education and Development
Japan Fellowship of Reconciliation
Mandat International
Millennium Institute
National Alliance of Women's Organizations

National Women's Council of Catalonia
New Japan Women's Association
New York County Lawyers' Association
Order of St. John
Prison Fellowship International
Rural Women Environmental Protection Association
Shimin Gaikou Centre
Simon Wiesenthal Center
United States Committee for UNIFEM
World Blind Union

(ii) For the reporting period 2002-2005:

Korean Federation for Environmental Movement
Organization for Defending Victims of Violence
People's Decade of Human Rights Education
Union nationale de la femme tunisienne

(d) To note that the Committee decided to close without prejudice consideration of the request for consultative status made by the following non-governmental organizations:

Association Sahel solidarité action
Foundation for Research and Support of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea

(e) To note that the Committee decided to take note of the withdrawal by the following three organizations of their applications for consultative status:

Center for Conflict Resolution
International Crisis Group
Kurdish Human Rights Project

Draft decision II
Application of Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales

The Economic and Social Council decides not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales.

Draft decision III
Application of American Sports Committee

The Economic and Social Council decides not to grant consultative status to the non-governmental organization American Sports Committee.

Draft decision IV
Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2008 regular session

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on its 2008 regular session.

II. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

3. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 1st through 10th, 12th, 13th and 15th meetings, held from 21 to 25 and 28 to 30 January 2008. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/2008/R.2 and Add.1-20);

(b) Compilation of applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status deferred from previous sessions of the Committee held in 1999 through 2007 (E/C.2/2008/CRP.1);

(c) Memorandum by the Secretary-General containing requests for reclassification (E/C.2/2008/R.3 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1);

(d) Request for reclassification deferred from previous session (E/C.2/2008/CRP.3).

A. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee

4. The Committee considered item 3 (a) of its agenda, applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee, contained in document E/C.2/2008/CRP.1, at its 7th through 10th, 13th and 15th meetings, on 24, 25, 29 and 30 January 2008.

Applications recommended

5. The Committee recommended that the Council grant consultative status to six organizations whose applications had been deferred from previous sessions (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)):

Assemblea delle Donne per lo Sviluppo e la Lotta Contro L'Esclusione Sociale
Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre
Iranian Society of Engineering Design and Assembly
Mountain Women Development Organization
Social Action Forum for Manav Adhikar
Stree Atyachar Virodhi Parishad

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

6. The Committee deferred its consideration of the applications of the following 30 non-governmental organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee during its 2008 regular session:

Africa Action
Agape International Spiritual Center
Ambedkar Centre for Justice and Peace
Asian-Eurasian Human Rights Forum

Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Transgêneros
Better Life Programme for the African Rural Woman
Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights
Cercle de recherche sur les droits et les devoirs de la personne humaine
Chinese Society for Corrosion and Protection
Coordination internationale pour la décennie
Drug Policy Alliance
Dynamic Christian World Mission Foundation
Forest Products Association of Canada
Hudson Institute
Human Rights House Foundation
International Centre for Peace Studies
International Human Rights Observer
Kashmiri American Council
Ma Qualcuno Pensi ad Abele
Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre
Marijuana Policy Project Foundation
National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
Observer Research Foundation
PeaceJam Foundation
People's Life Center
Red Venezolana de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo Social
Social Alert
Students for Sensible Drug Policy
Trance Research Foundation
TRIAL

Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Transgêneros

7. At its 10th, 14th and 16th meetings, on 25, 29 and 30 January 2008, the Committee considered the application of Associação Brasileira de Gays, Lésbicas e Transgêneros.

8. At the 10th meeting, on 25 January, the observer for Brazil, followed by the observer for Argentina, speaking on behalf of the Common Market of the South, expressed support for the organization.

9. At the 14th meeting, on 29 January, the representative of the organization took the floor to respond to additional questions posed by several delegations, in particular on the organization's stance vis-à-vis paedophilia, in the light of a recently published article by one of its prominent members in which that member confessed to be a paedophile.

10. At the 16th meeting, on 30 January, the Committee decided to defer the consideration of the application, as the organization had not provided the requested written responses.

Applications closed

11. At its 7th and 9th meetings, on 24 and 25 January 2008, the Committee decided to close without prejudice consideration of the applications of two non-governmental organizations, on the understanding that the decision would not

prevent either organization from submitting a new application, should either decide to do so (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (d)):

Association Sahel solidarité action
Foundation for Research and Support of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea

Applications withdrawn

12. At its 7th and 8th meetings, on 24 January, the Committee took note of the request of the following non-governmental organizations to withdraw their applications for consultative status (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (e)):

Centre for Conflict Resolution
International Crisis Group
Kurdish Human Rights Project

Applications not recommended

Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales

13. At its 10th, 15th and 16th meetings, on 25 and 30 January 2008, the Committee considered the application of Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales, a national organization based in Spain, deferred from the 2007 resumed session of the Committee.

14. At its 10th meeting, on 25 January, the Committee examined the replies provided by the organization to the questions posed by delegations at the 2007 resumed session of the Committee.

15. At the same meeting, the Committee also heard the representatives of the organization who responded to additional questions posed by several members of the Committee. The responses were also submitted in writing to the Committee.

16. At its 15th meeting, on 30 January, a number of delegations, including Egypt, Pakistan, Qatar and the Sudan, took the floor to pose additional questions to the organization and requested written responses, inter alia, regarding the organization's position on the promotion of the right of young people to sexual self-determination and the right of every individual, regardless of age, to explore and develop their sexuality. The representative of Egypt inquired about the organization's continued membership in the International Lesbian and Gay Association, after Spain had voted in the Economic and Social Council in April 2002 against granting consultative status to the International Lesbian and Gay Association on the grounds of the latter's involvement in paedophilia, in the light of the organization's reiteration that it comply with national laws and international law and categorically condemn paedophilia or any other type of violence against children.

17. The representative of Egypt also requested the organization to confirm that it will undertake to support the work of the United Nations and to promote knowledge of its principles and activities, particularly in relation to the family, in line with the criteria set out in paragraph 3 of Council resolution 1996/31. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, who stated that the previous responses submitted by the organization were satisfactory for his delegation, declared that the organization was doing excellent work. He requested that the Committee decide to grant consultative status to the organization.

18. Following a procedural debate revolving around the deferral of the application, the representative of Egypt proposed an adjournment of the debate on the application until the 2008 resumed session of the Committee, under rule 50 of the rules of procedure of the Council. Accordingly, the motion was put to a vote.

19. Statements in favour of the motion were made by the representatives of Egypt and Qatar. Statements were made against the motion by the representatives of Peru and the United Kingdom. Subsequently, the Committee rejected the proposal made by Egypt by a roll-call vote of 8 in favour to 8 against, with 2 abstentions, under rule 71 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Burundi, China, Egypt, Guinea, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Against:

Angola, Colombia, Dominica, Israel, Peru, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

India, Turkey.

20. At its 16th meeting, on 30 January 2008, the Committee then proceeded to vote on the proposal of the United Kingdom and Colombia.

Explanation of vote before the vote

21. The representatives of Egypt and Qatar stated that their delegations had posed several questions of a serious and substantive nature to the organization that had not yet been answered. They expressed their concern about the organization's views on paedophilia and doubted that it met the criteria set out in resolution 1996/31. For that reason, they would vote against granting status to the organization. They were of the view that the Committee should not take action on the organization before the Committee had received responses to all the questions posed by member States, as is the norm within the Committee when dealing with any application; otherwise, the Committee would be risking departure from its technical mandate.

22. The representative of Pakistan underlined that it was the responsibility of the Committee to apply equal treatment to all applications before the Committee. In past practice, the Committee had waited to receive the responses to questions by its members before taking action. In the current case, it felt that the non-governmental organization was receiving special treatment since some delegations had requested that action be taken before a response had been given to all the questions posed by the Committee.

23. By a roll-call vote of 7 in favour to 7 against, with 4 abstentions, the Committee decided to recommend not to grant consultative status to the organization, pursuant to rule 71 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Colombia, Dominica, Israel, Peru, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Against:

Burundi, China, Egypt, Pakistan, Qatar, Russian Federation, Sudan.

Abstaining:

Angola, Guinea, India, Turkey.

General statements

24. The representative of the United Kingdom reminded the Committee that the United Kingdom had made strenuous efforts in recent years to promote the participation of the broadest possible range of non-governmental organizations in the work of the United Nations. For those efforts to be successful, they had to be inclusive, reflect the full diversity of the United Nations membership and therefore recognize the full diversity of non-governmental organization activities. In its response to the Committee, the Federación Estatal de Lesbianas, Gays, Transexuales y Bisexuales had clearly demonstrated that it had fulfilled the criteria for consultative status set out in Council resolution 1996/31. It represented an important constituency, which had the same and equal right that all others had to engage in the work of the United Nations. No credible reason could therefore be presented for refusing them, except, in his view, that of straightforward discrimination.

25. The representative of Romania stated that the constant negative vote cast by the Committee, by which it would not recommend consultative status for organizations with that profile, on the grounds taken into consideration during the debates, as well as the general negative attitude directed towards them, could be regarded, in itself, as a form of discrimination against the rights of the people such organizations represented. He also emphasized that the Committee did not present a balanced record of recommendations regarding organizations that defended and promoted the rights of homosexuals, since out of the past 10 applications of such organizations brought to its consideration, the Committee recommended none.

American Sports Committee

26. At its 9th and 16th meetings, on 25 and 30 January 2008, the Committee considered the application of American Sports Committee, an international organization deferred from previous sessions. At its 16th meeting, on 30 January, the Committee decided to recommend not to grant consultative status to the organization as a number of delegations were of the view that the organization did not have activities that would contribute towards the work of the Council.

B. New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification

27. The Committee considered item 3 (b) of its agenda, new applications for consultative status, contained in documents E/C.2/2008/R.2 and Add.1-20 and E/C.2/2008/R.3 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 at its 1st through 7th and 12th, 13th and 15th meetings, held from 21 to 24, and 28 to 30 January 2008.

1. New applications for consultative status

Applications recommended

28. The Committee recommended that consultative status with the Council be granted to 64 organizations, which had submitted new applications (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (a)).

Applications deferred pending responses to questions posed by the Committee

29. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the applications of the following 25 organizations pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by the Committee at its 2008 regular session:

Armenia Fund USA
Association malienne d'initiatives et d'actions pour le développement
Assyrian Academic Society
Comitato Ev-K²-CNR
Democracy Coalition Project
Environment Action Association
European Renewable Energy Council
Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit
Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine
Fund for Women in Asia
General Research Institute on the Convention on the Rights of the Child
Global Hand
Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
International Center for Transitional Justice
International Federation of Liberal Youth
International Reading Association
International Sustainable Energy Organization
Kabbalah Centre
Kosmos Associates
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
New Zealand Council of Licensed Firearms Owners
Spirituality for Kids
Sub-Priorato del Piemonte dell'Ordine di San Fortunato
Verein Südwind Entwicklungspolitik
Women's Business Development Center

30. Owing to time constraints, the Committee was not able to review the responses posed by its members to the following organizations:

Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development
Ambassadors for Children
Dutch Council for Refugees
Fondation Ostad Elahi: éthique et solidarité humaine
Globe Aware
Human Rights Education Associates
International Dalit Solidarity Network
International Foundation for Dharma Nature Time
National Association of Home Builders
Neda Institute for Scientific-Political Research

Partnership for Global Justice
Play Soccer
Women's Health and Education Center

Armenia Fund USA

31. The Committee considered the application of Armenia Fund USA at its 5th and 15th meeting, on 23 and 30 January 2008. The organization did not answer the questions posed to it and requested to have the Committee defer consideration of its application until the next regular session of the Committee.

32. At the 5th meeting, on 23 January, the representative of Azerbaijan, speaking as an observer State, drew the attention of Committee members to the reference made by the organization of an area it called "Nagorno-Karabakh region", which is not correct because the Nagorno-Karabakh, according to United Nations terminology, is part of the territory of Azerbaijan. The representative of Azerbaijan asked the organization to respect the territorial integrity of his country and to comply with United Nations terminology and to make the necessary corrections in its application form.

33. At its 15th meeting, on 30 January, the representative of Turkey stated that it was for the Committee to decide to defer an application. The representative reminded the Committee that Armenia Fund USA had asked for deferral without giving any explanation regarding why it had not provided the additional information requested and why it had not replied to the question posed by the Committee.

34. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that it would review the application of the organization at its resumed session in May 2008 and requested the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to inform the organization of the decision and that the Committee was expecting written responses to the previously posed questions.

Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit

35. The Committee considered the application of Federatie van Nederlandse Verenigingen tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit at its 4th and 15th meetings, on 22 and 30 January 2008. A number of delegations, including some observers, voiced their support for recommending consultative status to the organization while others posed several questions to the organization.

36. At the 4th meeting, on 22 January, the representative of the organization took the floor to respond to the questions posed and submitted her responses in writing.

37. At the same meeting, the representative of the Netherlands, speaking as an observer, supported the organization and stated that the applicant met all criteria for accreditation as set out in Council resolution 1996/31 and that its activities fell within the competence of the Council.

38. At its 15th meeting, on 30 January, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of the organization, pending the receipt of complete written responses to some of those and other questions posed.

Sub-Priorato del Piemonte dell'Ordine di San Fortunato

39. The Committee decided not to review the application of the organization, based in Italy, until it had received a response from the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations regarding the rules of procedure monitoring the registration of non-governmental organizations in Italy and confirmation that the organization had been in existence for at least two years before the application date.

Application withdrawn

40. At its 5th meeting, on 23 January, the Committee took note of the request of the Kurdish Human Rights Project to withdraw its application for consultative status (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (e)). Following the withdrawal of the application by the organization, the representative of Turkey made the following statement:

> "The Kurdish Human Rights Project does not respect even the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, such as respect for territorial integrity of States. On its website it publishes maps of so-called "Kurdistan", which disregard the territorial integrity of Turkey and some other United Nations Member States. In its publications, it uses terms that are not in line with United Nations terminology and that are aimed at the territorial integrity of Turkey. Furthermore, even in its application form it defines certain regions of Turkey on ethnical terms rather than geographical. The stance of Kurdish Human Rights Project regarding terrorism and combating terrorism is another source of concern. Kurdish Human Rights Project strives to have the terrorist organization PKK/Kadek/Kongra-Gel removed from the list of international terrorist organizations maintained by the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as from the lists of some countries, including the United Kingdom and the United States. Furthermore, Kurdish Human Rights is highly involved in litigation activities. In the court cases against Turkey at the European Court of Human Rights, numerous applicants have claimed cost and expenses from the Court for the services provided to them by Kurdish Human Rights Project".

2. Deferred and new requests for reclassification

41. At its 11th and 13th meetings, on 28 and 29 January 2008, the Committee had before it four requests for reclassification for consultative status contained in document E/C.2/2008/R.3 and R.3/Add.1 and one request deferred from previous sessions contained in document E/C.2/2008/CRP.3. It decided to recommend the reclassification of two organizations from Roster to special status (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (b)). It did not recommend reclassification of the following organizations from special to general status:

International Real Estate Federation
Institute of International Social Development

42. It deferred consideration of the International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism, pending further clarification of a number of issues raised by the Committee.

C. Applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council that have merged with other non-governmental organizations

43. At its 13th meeting, on 29 January 2008, the Committee considered the application of the International Association of Women Judges, a merger between International Women Judges Federation, an organization in special consultative status with the Council, and International Association of Women Judges, an organization not in consultative status with the Council. The Committee decided to consider the application of the organization as a new request for consultative status, under item 3 (b) of its agenda at its 2008 resumed session.

III. Quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council

A. Deferred quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council

44. The Committee had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing a compilation of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council on their activities during the period from 1999 to 2007, which had been deferred from previous sessions of the Committee (E/C.2/2008/CRP.2). Owing to time constraints, the Committee did not review the following quadrennial reports deferred from previous sessions:

Centrist Democrat International (see E/C.2/1999/2/Add.13)
Centrist Democrat International (CDI) (see E/C.2/2007/2/Add.25)
Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (see E/C.2/2005/2/Add.10)
Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Institute (see E/C.2/2007/2/Add.30)
International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples (see E/C.2/2006/2/Add.6)
International Press Institute (see E/C.2/2006/2/Add.9)
National Council of Women of Thailand (see E/C.2/2005/2/Add.19)

B. Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council

45. The Committee considered agenda item 4 (b) of its agenda at its 14th meeting, on 29 January 2008. It had before it a note by the Secretary-General containing new quadrennial reports (E/C.2/2008/2 and Add.1-26). The Committee took note of the quadrennial reports of 53 organizations (see chap. I, draft decision I, subpara. (c)).

46. The Committee decided to defer its consideration of the quadrennial reports of the following organizations, pending receipt of responses to the questions posed by the Committee:

Armenian Assembly of America
Centre d'accompagnement des autotochnes pygmées et minoritaires vulnérables

Human Rights Internet
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies
Pax Christi International
Ukrainian World Congress

47. Owing to time constraints, the Committee did not review the following 76 quadrennial reports contained in documents E/C.2/2008/2/Add.12-26:

All China Women's Federation
Association algérienne d'alphabétisation
Association for Democratic Initiatives
Association of United Families International
Buddha's Light International Association
CARE International
Centre for Democracy and Development
Cercle des amis de la forêt pour le 21e siècle
Citizens Rights Protection Society
Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations
Coordination des immigrés du sud du monde
Defence for Children International
Disabled Peoples International
European Forum for Victim Services
Fédération de Tunis de solidarité sociale
Federation of Associations of Former Civil Servants
Focus on the Family
Global Action on Aging
Global Fund for Women
Global Volunteers
Handicap International
Hariri Foundation
Heritage Foundation
Human Appeal International
Institut international des sciences administratives
Interact Worldwide
International Alert
International Association of Charities
International Association of Peace Messenger Cities
International Bar Association
International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
International Commission on Distance Education
International Council on Human Rights Policy
International Council on Mining and Metals
International Federation for Family Development
International Federation of ACAT
International Federation of Associations of the Elderly
International Federation of Medical Students' Associations
International Federation of Persons with Physical Disability
International Federation of University Women
International Federation Terre des Hommes
International Movement ATD Fourth World
International Network of Liberal Women

International Planned Parenthood Federation (European region)
International Planned Parenthood Federation (Western hemisphere region)
International Women's Health Coalition
Inter-Press Service International Association
Japan Civil Liberties Union
Japan Federation of Bar Associations
Kids Can Free the Children
Korean Institute for Women and Politics
Legião da Boa Vontade
Ligue internationale contre le racisme et l'antisémitisme
Mercy-USA for Aid and Development
National Wildlife Federation
Netherlands Organization for International Development Cooperation
Network Women in Development Europe
Nord-Sud XXI
Oasis Open City Foundation
Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement International
Organization of Islamic Capitals and Cities
PanAmerican-PanAfrican Association
Permanent Assembly for Human Rights
Rencontre africaine pour la défense des droits de l'homme
Resources for the Future
RICS Foundation
Several Sources Foundation
Socialist International
Stichting Projekta: Foundation for Women and Development Services
United Nations Association of San Diego
Wittenberg Center for Alternative Resources
Women's World Summit Foundation
World Association of Children's Friends
World Economic Forum
World Organization of Building Officials
Youth with a Mission

IV. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs

48. At its 15th meeting, on 29 January 2008, the Committee heard an oral statement from the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, presenting the report on strengthening of the Section. The emphasis was put on the integrated system, a web-based extension of the paperless committee strategy instituted in 2003 by the Section, which has not only saved $1.5 million per year in staffing costs but also rendered communications with non-governmental organization delegates much more effective. The paperless committee system was completely redeveloped in 2007 and was introduced during the 2008 regular session at the United Nations Headquarters. Although the same concept still applies, the paperless committee system has moved from being a record archiving system to a record retrieval system. The paperless committee idea was described as an outstanding initiative, with demonstrated

outcomes focusing on process re-engineering, working methods and knowledge management. It is worth noting that the paperless committee project is presently under consideration for the UN21 Awards programme.

49. Under the outreach programme, the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section reported that the ongoing reforms were ensuring participation of the widest possible geographical representation of non-governmental organizations, in particular of those coming from developing countries. Furthermore, the United Nations-Non-Governmental Organizations-Informal Regional Network enabled a better understanding of United Nations activities and therefore provided greater interaction of non-governmental organizations from developing countries with the Council. In the light of the growing impact and influence of non-governmental organizations in the global arena, it is extremely important for the Non-Governmental Organizations Section to establish the global context for non-governmental organization activities and to strengthen the non-governmental organization sector from within by ending isolation and enhancing global debate and promoting collaboration and empowerment through collective action.

50. The Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section drew the Committee's attention to the annual ministerial review innovation fair, which was held in Geneva in July 2007. In the framework of the fair, it was emphasized that strengthening partnerships in development could be achieved through a better interaction between non-governmental organizations and the Council. The fair was successful in involving a wide participation of non-governmental organizations from Africa and Asia, which shared their best practices and inspired and encouraged others to continue their commitment and dedication to their missions.

51. During the ensuing discussion, Committee members expressed their satisfaction with the paperless committee system and reiterated their support for innovation and the increasing participation of non-governmental organizations, in particular of those from developing countries. The accuracy of the paperless system was highly appreciated by the representatives of China and the Sudan, in respect of the new features added to the website that made it more interactive. In relation to the issue of connectivity in developing countries, the delegate of India expressed his concern and requested the help of integrated civil society organizations, emphasizing his desire for more proactive action, including outside of the meeting, through the Intranet. At the same meeting, the delegate of Cuba compared the current paperless system with the previous system, in which different coloured binders had been used, and expressed his appreciation of the current system.

V. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Council resolution 1996/31, including the process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations, and Council decision 1995/304

A. Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group

Report on the informal working group meeting in 2007

52. At the 11th meeting, on 28 January 2008, the Chairman drew the Committee's attention to a draft resolution entitled "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures" (E/C.2/2008/L.1), submitted by him on the basis of informal consultations.

53. At the same meeting, the representative of (Turkey), reported on the meeting of the informal working group (composed of China, Colombia, Egypt, the Russian Federation, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), focusing on the consideration of a draft resolution aimed at ensuring the timely receipt of quadrennial reports required from non-governmental organizations enjoying general and special consultative status with the Council.

54. Also at the same meeting, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the draft resolution entitled "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures", reflected the need to address the non-submittal of quadrennial reports by organizations that had already received reminders but had failed to comply with their obligations. A total of 169 organizations had failed to submit two or more consecutive reports. He informed the Committee that the draft resolution listed specific guidelines for reporting and actions to prevent future non-reporting.

55. The delegates of Cuba, Dominica, Qatar and the Sudan, while supporting the draft, expressed concern over the proposed appeal process referred to in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution. The representative of Egypt pointed out that the appeal process was prescribed for in Council resolution 1996/31 and that according to it the Committee had the mandate to determine the seriousness and adequacy of the reasons provided by a given organization and the exceptional circumstances that had prevented it from fulfilling the reporting requirement.

56. Also under the item on review of the working methods of the Committee, a number of delegates expressed their views on the need to promote greater participation in the Council by organizations from developing countries and the need to maintain updated information on organizations with Roster status, issues of which should be examined by the informal working group.

Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures

57. At the 16th meeting, on 30 January 2008, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Measures to improve the quadrennial reporting procedures" (E/C.2/2008/L.1/Rev.1), submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations.

58. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution E/C.2/2008/L.1/Rev.1 (see chap. I, sect. A, above). Before the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the Chairman in which he emphasized the exceptional understanding applied in respect of paragraph 2 of the draft resolution.

Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Council resolution 1996/31

59. At the 16th meeting, on 30 January 2008, the Committee adopted an oral decision read by the Chairman as follows:

> The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decides to request the Non-Governmental Organizations Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to send a final reminder letter in February 2008 to the non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status that have failed to submit their quadrennial reports for more than two reporting periods, a copy of which should be sent to the permanent mission to the United Nations of the country where the non-governmental organization concerned has its headquarters. The letter should set out the possible consequences, including the suspension or withdrawal of consultative status of the non-governmental organization, for failing to submit a report to the Committee at its the resumed session, to be held in May 2008.

Consideration of issues in the agenda of the informal working group

60. At the 16th meeting on 30 January 2008, the Committee, after a long debate, adopted the following draft decision read by the Chairman as follows:

> The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decides that the working group, in its intersessional meeting, shall discuss, inter alia, ways to ensure that non-governmental organizations, being considered for consultative status or reviewed for any other matter, are not involved in any internationally recognized criminal activity, including terrorism, as envisaged in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

61. After the adoption, the representatives of Cuba and Qatar stated that they would participate in those future discussions of the working group, with a view to finding an agreed formula with a comprehensive approach and avoiding selectivity.

B. Other related matters

1. Non-governmental organizations requesting a change of name

62. At its 11th meeting, on 28 January 2008, the Committee took note of the change of name requested by the following organizations:

(a) Mercy Corps International (special; 1998) to Mercy Corps;

(b) International Women's Rights Action Watch, Malaysia (special; 2004) to International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific;

(c) Interreligious and International Federation for World Peace, USA (special; 2004), to Universal Peace Federation;

(d) Population Communications International (Roster B; 1974) to PCI-Media Impact;

(e) Elizabeth Seton Federation (special; 2001) to Sisters of Charity Federation.

63. The Committee did not take note of the change of name of Transnational Radical Party (general; 1995) to Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty. Consideration of the organization's change of name was deferred to the resumed session of the Committee, pending the receipt of responses to questions posed by a number of delegations regarding the connotation of the new name and its impact on the aims, purposes and activities of the organization.

2. Non-governmental organizations requesting withdrawal of consultative status

64. At the 11th meeting, on 28 January 2008, the Committee took note of the termination of the existence of Fondation Bertarelli, an organization that had received Roster status in 2004.

3. Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with the United Nations

65. At the 16th meeting, on 30 January 2008, the President of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with the United Nations (CONGO), told the Committee that his 60-year-old organization, a consolidated network of some 500 members worldwide, advocated for engaged and empowered civil society communities, especially in support of grass-roots organizations and vulnerable groups. He informed the Committee that CONGO had, in 2007 alone, organized the African Civil Society Forum and the Civil Society Development Forum. Praising the Council's substantive session of 2007, he said it had opened new doors for a constructive and collaborative approach to tackling the urgent development tasks ahead on the part of Governments, the United Nations system and civil society. Meaningful results required adequate resources and diverse, inclusive and democratic participation.

VI. Implementation of Council resolution 2006/46

66. There were no requests for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46.

VII. Consideration of special reports and complaints by Member States

67. There were no special reports or complaints by Member States before the Committee at the 2008 regular session.

VIII. General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network

68. At its 13th meeting, on 29 January 2008, the Committee heard a report on the issue by the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section.

IX. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

69. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations held its 2008 regular session from 20 to 31 January 2008. The Committee held 16 meetings.

B. Attendance

70. The session was attended by 19 members of the Committee. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations, observers for non-member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and observers for non-governmental organizations also attended. The list of participants will be issued as document E/C.2/2008/INF.1.

71. At its 2008 regular session, the Committee heard 15 representatives of non-governmental organizations who were given the opportunity to respond to questions raised by the Committee. The additional information provided by the representatives facilitated the debate and the work of the Committee in taking its decisions.

C. Election of officers

72. At its 1st meeting, on 21 January, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation.

Chairman:

Hassan Hamid Hassan (Sudan)

Vice-Chairmen:

Alexandru Ciorobea (Romania)
Serhat Aksen (Turkey)
Bilal Hayee (Pakistan)

73. At its 2nd meeting, on 21 January, the Committee elected, by acclamation, Luis A. Amorós Núñez (Cuba) to serve as Vice-Chairman.

74. At its 10th meeting, on 25 January, the Committee elected Bilal Hayee (Pakistan) to serve as Rapporteur, in addition to serving as Vice-Chairman.

D. Agenda

75. At its 1st meeting, on 21 January, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its 2008 session as contained in document E/C.2/2008/1. The agenda reads as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations:
   (a) Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification deferred from previous sessions of the Committee;
   (b) New applications for consultative status and new requests for reclassification;
   (c) Applications of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that have merged with non-governmental organizations without such consultative status.
4. Quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council:
   (a) Deferred quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council;
   (b) Review of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council.
5. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.
6. Review of the methods of work of the Committee: implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, including the process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations, and Council decision 1995/304:
   (a) Process of accreditation of representatives of non-governmental organizations;
   (b) Consideration of issues in the agenda of the informal working group;
   (c) Other related matters.
7. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/46.
8. Consideration of special reports.
9. General voluntary trust fund in support of the United Nations Non-Governmental Organizations Informal Regional Network.
10. Provisional agenda and documentation for the 2009 session of the Committee.
11. Adoption of the report of the Committee.

76. At the same meeting, the Committee approved its organization of work as contained in working paper No. 1.

E. Documentation

77. The list of documents before the Committee at its 2008 regular session is contained in the annex to the present document.

X. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its 2008 regular session

78. At its 16th meeting, on 30 January, the Committee adopted the draft report as contained in document E/C.2/2008/L.2 and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report, in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.2/2008/1	2	Provisional agenda and annotations
E/C.2/2008/CRP.1	3 (a)	Applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council deferred from previous sessions of the Committee held from 1999 to 2007
E/C.2/2008/CRP.3	3 (a)	Requests for reclassification deferred from the 2007 resumed session
E/C.2/2008/R.2 and Add.1-20	3 (b)	New applications received from non-governmental organizations for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council
E/C.2/2008/R.3 and Add.1	3 (b)	New requests for reclassification
E/C.2/2008/CRP.2	4 (a)	Compilation of quadrennial reports submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council deferred from previous sessions held from 1999 to 2007
E/C.2/2008/2 and Add.1-26	4 (b)	Quadrennial reports for the period 2003-2006 submitted through the Secretary-General pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31
E/C.2/2008/CRP.6	5	Study on the harmonization of civil society participation through a proposal of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to implement the integrated civil society organizations toolkit
E/C.2/2008/CRP.4	6 (b)	Consideration of issues on the agenda of the informal working group
E/C.2/2008/CRP.5	9	Report on the participation of civil society at the annual ministerial review innovation fair